

CONFIDENTIAL

OLC 72-0786

11 July 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Developments During Your Absence

1. Representative Rangel Request for Reports on Drug Traffic.

You will recall that on 13 June I wrote Rangel saying that in view of his continued interest in obtaining copies of certain Agency reports on the illicit drug traffic, we were reexamining the possibility of declassifying at least some of these reports. On 28 June, Rangel wrote Ingersoll of BNDD requesting the same material. Ingersoll has referred the request to us. (Tab A) The whole problem has been taken up with the White House, where Walter Minick, Bud Krogh's deputy, apparently opposes declassification of any material on the illicit drug traffic. The matter is now being reviewed by David Young, Executive Secretary of the Interagency Review Committee on Classification, whose decision is expected momentarily. If Young agrees with Minick that none of the reports can be released, we should be prepared for possible legal action, and OGC has been in touch with Justice in this regard.

Rangel seems determined to press for a showdown. On 10 July he issued a public statement charging that CIA's "paranoid quest for secrecy" was keeping vital information about the drug traffic from the American public, and that we were "covering up for the international merchants of death." (Tab B)

2. Representative Aspin's Letter on Opium Smuggling.

Aspin's 27 June letter to you which appeared in the Congressional Record on that date was received by the Agency on 3 July. We immediately asked Aspin's office for the "additional information" which he said he had received from Alfred McCoy. Upon examination, this additional information

DOJ Review
Completed.

CONFIDENTIAL

CRC, 4/10/2003

25X1

EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
OF E. O. 11652, EXEMPTION CATEGORY:
§ 58(1), (2) or (4) (circle one or more)
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON

Approval of DCI

CONFIDENTIAL

appears to be essentially the same as that which McCoy had provided the Proxmire Subcommittee in support of his testimony there several weeks ago. (See Tab C for that portion of the material McCoy provided Aspin which deals with the Agency and Air America.) FE has requested the field to report on the detailed allegations.

Attached at Tab D is a copy of Aspin's 27 June letter to you, together with an excerpt from the Congressional Record of 30 June containing Charlie Gubser's comments and a copy of your reply to Aspin.

3. Allegations of Preferential Treatment Being Given to Air America.

Scoop Jackson has received a letter (Tab E) from an outfit in Vientiane called Lao Air Development which complains that Air America is overcharging U.S. agencies and which offers comparable services at substantially lower rates. Craig Jarrell, who signed the letter, claims he is in touch with Jack Anderson on the matter. We promised Jackson's office we would check on the facts, which DDS is doing.

4. Legislative Interdepartmental Group Meeting.

At a 7 July LIG meeting serious concern was expressed regarding the Mansfield "end the war" amendment. Apparently the Administration is dismayed to learn that perhaps a dozen senators whose support it had assumed, such as Chuck Percy and Jim Pearson of the Foreign Relations Committee, have turned out to be "fence sitters" despite some active lobbying by Kissinger. It is planned that after Congress reconvenes, Kissinger will entertain the "fence sitters" at a breakfast and try to win them over, hoping that the Democratic disarray following the convention, coupled with expected ARVN military successes, will strengthen his appeal.

5. Armed Services Committee Investigation of LaVelle Case.

Stennis has sent Jim Woolsey and Larry Garcia, of the Committee staff, to Saigon to investigate the LaVelle case. The station has been alerted to show them appropriate courtesies but avoid any discussion of the LaVelle matter.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

6. Interest in Hersh Articles on "Rainmaking."

On 5 July John Goldsmith called to say he had seen Seymour Herhs's New York Times story of 3 July (Tab F) alleging Agency involvement in "rainmaking" in Indochina. He said that in view of the concern the story would probably create on the Hill, he was calling it to Stennis' attention, with the suggestion that Stennis get himself briefed on the matter so he could respond to the questions that were likely to come up. In view of Hersh's second story on the same subject on 9 July (Tab G), we should be ready for queries by both friend and foe.

7. Scheduled Congressional Appearance.

House Foreign Affairs has you tentatively scheduled to appear on 27 July to discuss Soviet strategic weapons and SALT verification. Presumably the text you used before Senate Foreign Relations with little or no modification would be responsive to ⁴¹25X1ir request.

John M. Maury
Legislative Counsel

Attachments:
Tabs A - G

CONFIDENTIAL

TAB

JUL 3 1972

The Honorable
Charles B. Rangel
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

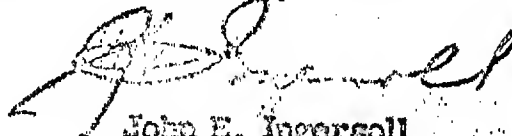
Dear Mr. Rangel:

This is in reply to your letter of June 23, 1972, requesting certain documents.

I am sending you those documents produced by ENDD and I have taken the liberty of forwarding your request to the Central Intelligence Agency for their consideration in regard to those documents which they originated.

If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,



John E. Ingersoll
Director

Enclosures

"The World Drug Situation Report"

"Latin America, The United States and
The Drug Problem"

"Chemical Requirements for Opium Refining
in Southeast Asia"

"Estimates of Illicit Opium Production Worldwide"

"The Illicit Importation of Heroin into the United States"

cc: Heroin Coordinator ✓
Central Intelligence Agency

D
DL
SI

SI/JWParker/alz/6-30-72/21051

CHARLES B. RANGEL
10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

H. PATRICK SWYGERT
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
TELEPHONE: 202-225-4365

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

MRS. VIRGINIA BELL
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

144 WEST 125TH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10027
TELEPHONE: 666-8600

June 28, 1972

John E. Ingersoll, Director
Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs
1405 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20537

Dear Mr. Ingersoll:

As you know, the Select Committee on Crime has been holding hearings in New York and Washington on drug use in our public schools. Each witness makes it more clear that heroin addiction among our youth cannot be wiped out as long as heroin is smuggled into this country. I know that this, too, is your feeling and that of BNDD.

In order to make it harder for Congress to ignore this critical problem, it is most imperative that we have as much information as possible on heroin trafficking and the smuggling of other dangerous drugs. "The World Opium Situation," which your office was kind enough to provide me last year was of great assistance in this regard. I would deeply appreciate your providing me with the following reports as well dealing with international drug traffic:

- "Opium Production and Movement in the Near East and South Asia"
- "The Cocaine Situation in Latin America"
- "Chemical Requirements for Opium Refining in Southeast Asia"
- "The Illicit Production and Movement of Opiates in Latin America"
- "Opium Poppy Cultivation in Northern Thailand"
- "Opium Production and Movement in Southeast Asia"
- "Paraguay--Heroin Crossroads of South America"
- "Recent Trends in the Illicit Narcotics Market in Southeast Asia"
- "The French-Turkish Connection: The Movement of Opium and Morphine Base from Turkey to France."

Thank you for your attention to this most important request.
With best regards, I am,

Sincerely,


Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

CBR:e



TOP SECRET

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

PRESS ITEM FOR THE DCI

DISTRIBUTION:

DDCI
ExD
DCI/IC
DDI
DDS
DDP (2)
DDS/T
D/OCI
ONE
OSR
OSI (2)
Ch/OpsCn
PDB
INDICO
CSDO (3)
IW
SAVA
OSD

DATE: 10 Jul
ITEM: NO. 12
REF: NO.

UPI-092

(CIA)

THUERMER
LEGCO

WASHINGTON--REP. CHARESL RANGEL, D-N.Y., SAID TODAY A "PARANOID QUEST FOR SECRECY" IN THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA) IS KEEPING INFORMATION ABOUT DRUG TRAFFIC IN SOUTHEAST ASIA FROM THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

RANGEL, A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CRIME, SAID THE CIA HAS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED HIS REQUESTS FOR REPORTS ON OPIUM AND HEROIN TRAFFICKING IN THE AREA, ALTHOUGH SOME ARE ALREADY PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OR ARE AVAILABLE FROM OTHER AGENCIES.

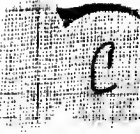
"THIS BUREAUCRATIC BUNGLING AND PARANOID QUEST FOR SECRECY ON THE PART OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HAS PREVENTED CONGRESS FROM EFFECTIVELY DETERMINING WHICH OF OUR SO-CALLED 'ALLIES' ARE PROFITEERING IN HEROIN," HE SAID IN A STATEMENT. "EACH CITIZEN HAS THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT IS IN THESE REPORTS -- WHICH GOVERNMENTS ALLOW DRUG PRODUCTION TO FLOURISH AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR CHILDREN'S LIVES."

RANGEL SAID NINE REPORTS HE IS SEEKING FROM THE CIA NAME THE INDIVIDUALS, TRIBES, GOVERNMENT OFFICERS AND PLACES INVOLVED IN HEROIN TRAFFICKING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. BUT HE SAID THE AGENCY HAS CLASSIFIED THE REPORTS AND HAS REFUSED TO GIVE THEM TO HIM.

"IT IS TIME FOR THE CIA TO STOP PLAYING GAMES AND TO STOP COVERING UP FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MERCHANTS OF DEATH ...," HE SAID.

YM 7-10

Comment: Thuerner and Maury have copies.



IV. CIA AND AIR AMERICA INVOLVEMENT

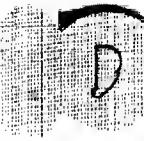
Nelson Gross quoted the Managing Director of Air America, who called my charge that Air America aircraft have been transporting opium "utterly and absolutely false." Air America's involvement has been confirmed by Gen. Ouane and by Gen. Thao Ma, former commander of the Laotian Air Force, who refused to carry opium for Gen. Ouane.

I spent six days in August, 1971 in the opium-growing Meo village of Long Pot, Laos. Ger Su Yang, the District officer, told me:

Meo officers with three or four stripes [captain or more] came from Long Tieng to buy our opium. They came in American helicopters, perhaps two or three men at one time. The helicopter leaves them here for a few days and they walk to villages over there, then come back here and radioed Long Tieng to send another helicopter for them. They take the opium back to Long Tieng.

This account was verified by everyone I talked with. Ger Su Yang also reported that the helicopter pilots were always Americans. Flora Lewis, writing in The Washington Post on July 23, 1971, said:

The CIA has changed its rules in an attempt to stop the use of its private airline, Air America, for transport of drugs [opium and heroin] in Laos. Although only two months ago CIA director Richard Helms adamantly denied there had been any agency involvement in this traffic, he is now said to have told a secret Congressional hearing that there was involvement but it has stopped.



LES ASPIN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE:
ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE #4

HOME OFFICES:
603 MAIN STREET
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53403
414-632-8194

210 DODGE STREET
JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN 53545
608-752-9074

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
515 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING
202-225-3031

CONG

June 27, 1972

Mr. Richard Helms, Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Helms:

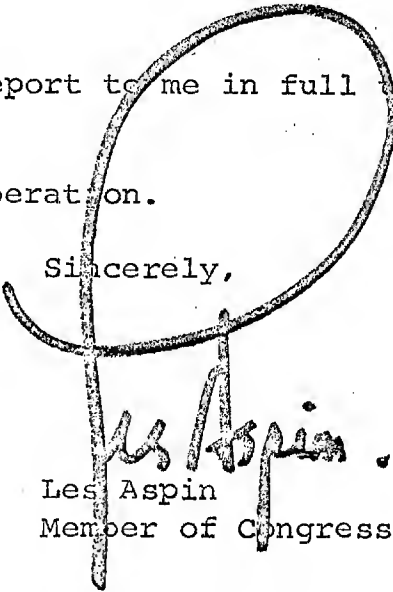
I am publicly releasing today substantial new evidence that indicates that U.S. pilots flying CIA-operated helicopters have been smuggling opium inside Laos. These allegations are contained in a letter and additional information that I have received from Mr. Alfred McCoy, author of a forthcoming book on heroin traffic in Southeast Asia. If these allegations are true, then the CIA is implicated in fostering the drug traffic that ruins the lives of tens of thousands of Americans.

I am writing to you today to request that you thoroughly investigate Mr. McCoy's allegations. Since Mr. McCoy obtained his information last summer, it is imperative to determine whether this kind of drug trafficking is still going on. A principal unanswered question which the CIA must resolve is: "At what level in the CIA were officials aware of this illicit drug traffic?".

I hope that you will report to me in full the results of your investigation.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Les Aspin
Member of Congress

LA:bk

E 6662

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—Extensions of Remarks

June 30, 1972

CIA DOES NOT SMUGGLE OPIUM

HON. CHARLES S. GUBSER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 1972

Mr. GUBSER. Mr. Speaker, once again there has been an upsurge in charges alleging direct CIA involvement in drug traffic in Southeast Asia. These allegations have proven false in the past. Last year I personally looked into similar charges and I am satisfied myself that they were without substance. Moreover, in April 1971, Mr. Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence, made a public categorical denial of Agency involvement in drug traffic before the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He has personally reaffirmed this denial to me. What the facts actually demonstrated was that the CIA is cooperating closely with other Government agencies in a concerted effort to curb the world drug traffic. The efforts of these U.S. agencies are designed to persuade countries, which for centuries have accepted the growth or local consumption of illicit drugs, to take stringent steps against such practices. They are also cooperating to eliminate the flow of these drugs into the United States.

Most recently, Mr. Alfred McCoy, a graduate student who is about to publish a book on the drug traffic in Southeast Asia, has made the same charges against the CIA. In early June, he aired his charges before a Senate subcommittee and received considerable publicity. Immediately after Mr. McCoy's testimony, Mr. Nelson Gross, senior advisor to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for International Narcotics Matters, publicly and in detail refuted Mr. McCoy's charges. I regret that these allegations have been given further publicity in a statement by a Member of this body when he published in the Congressional Record of June 27, a letter he has directed to Mr. Helms, requesting an investigation of the allegations made by Mr. McCoy.

Mr. Speaker, Director Helms' denial of charges that CIA has been involved in the drug traffic has been confirmed by other senior U.S. Government officials. There has been no substance to the charges that have been leveled and it is most regrettable that the CIA must be the continual target of a tactic which serves to undermine positive efforts that are being taken under difficult circumstances to curb drug trafficking. Those few who promote false accusations to the contrary undermine the good work that is being done and the personal integrity of high officials of our Government. I can assure the Members of this body and all American citizens that our Government is committed 100 percent to solving the drug problem.

Mr. Speaker, while it is unfortunate that these old charges have been publicly aired again, I believe that Mr. Helms' letter of June 28 on this subject should also be included in the Record:

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY,
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR,
June 28, 1972.

HON. LES ASPIN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Aspin: The Congressional Record of June 27, 1972, carries a letter addressed to me by you announcing your release of "substantial new evidence that indicates U.S. pilots flying CIA operated helicopters have been smuggling opium inside Laos."

I have yet to receive your letter. Pending its receipt, however, I shall begin a thorough investigation of this alleged "new evidence" and will advise you in due course of the results. In this connection, I call to your attention the testimony of Mr. Nelson Gross, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for International Narcotics Matters, before the Congressional Inquiry Regarding International Narcotics Traffic on June 9, 1972. He there quoted the Air America Managing Director's statement that Mr. Alfred McCoy's allegation before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee that Air America aircraft have been transporting opium in Northern Laos on a regular basis is "utterly and absolutely false."

In the interim, I wish to reiterate strongly what I have said publicly to the American Society of Newspaper Editors:

"There is the arrant nonsense that the Central Intelligence Agency is somehow involved in the world drug traffic. We are not. As fathers, we are as concerned about the lives of our children and grandchildren as are all of you. As an Agency, in fact, we are heavily engaged in tracing the foreign roots of the drug traffic for the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. We hope we are helping with a solution; we know we are not contributing to the problem."

In addition, you will have no doubt noticed in the Congressional Record of June 2, 1971, that Congressman Charles Gubser cited a letter from Mr. John Ingersoll, Director of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, attesting to the fact that this Agency

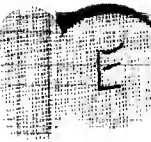
has taken a great number of steps against the narcotics trade. Further, we have issued the strongest instructions, and have most vigorously enforced them, to prohibit any inadvertent use of CIA facilities by narcotics smugglers.

In the light of these well-established positions, we find it disappointing to be subjected to the type of public allegation represented by graduate student McCoy's assertions of "new evidence," the innuendo in which can only dishearten CIA personnel of honor and integrity working against this nefarious trade.

I have taken the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to Congressman Gubser because of his interest in these matters.

Sincerely,

RICHARD HELMS, Director.



CONG

25X1

Page Denied



CONFIDENTIAL

OLC 72-0768

5 July 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Senate Armed Services Committee Interest in Hersh
Story re "Rainmaking"

1. This morning John Goldsmith, of the Senate Armed Services Committee staff, called to say that the New York Times story by Seymour Hersh of 3 July 1972 (copy attached) was attracting considerable interest and would no doubt be the subject of formal inquiry during upcoming Senate deliberations. He said the subject might be brought up in connection with discussion of the pending "end the war" amendment to the Foreign Assistance Authorization bill, and almost certainly would come up in connection with the discussion of Indochina when the Defense Procurement bill came up.

2. Goldsmith said he wanted to let us know that for the above reasons he felt he should call the matter to the attention of Chairman Stennis, and was therefore preparing a note for Stennis (now out of town) suggesting that Stennis get himself briefed on the subject and be forearmed with information necessary to respond to the questions which are likely to come up.

3. I told Goldsmith that I knew nothing about the substance of these allegations but appreciated his alerting us.

JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

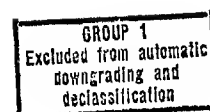
25X1

Att.

Distribution:

Original - Subject
1 - A/DCI
1 - Ex/Dir
1 - DDP
1 - C/FE
1 - SAVA

CONFIDENTIAL



JUL 1974

Rainmaking Is Used As Weapon by U.S.

Cloud Seeding in Indochina Confirmed— Chemical Also Employed to Foil Radar

By SEYMOUR M. HERSH

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 2—The United States has been secretly seeding clouds over North Vietnam, Laos and South Vietnam to increase and control the rainfall for military purposes.

Government sources, both civilian and military, said during an extensive series of interviews that the Air Force cloud-seeding program has been aimed most recently at hindering movement of North Vietnamese troops and equipment and suppressing enemy anti-aircraft missile fire.

The disclosure confirmed growing speculation in Congressional and scientific circles about the use of weather modification in Southeast Asia. Despite years of experiments with rainmaking in the United States and elsewhere, scientists are not sure they understand its long-term effect on the ecology of a region.

Some Opposed Program

The weather manipulation in Indochina, which was first tried in South Vietnam in 1963, is the first confirmed use of meteorological warfare. Although it is not prohibited by any international conventions on warfare, artificial rainmaking has been strenuously opposed by some State Department officials.

It could not be determined whether the operations were being conducted in connection with the current North Vietnamese offensive or the renewed American bombing of the North.

Effectiveness Doubted

Beginning in 1967, some State Department officials protested that the United States, by deliberately altering the natural rainfall in parts of Indochina, was taking environmental risks of unknown proportions. But many advocates of the operation have found little wrong with using weather mod-

"What's worse," one official asked, "dropping bombs or rain?"

All of the officials interviewed said that the United States did not have the capability to cause heavy flooding during the summer in the northern parts of North Vietnam, where serious flooding occurred last year.

Officially, the White House and State Department declined comment on the use of meteorological warfare. "This is one of those things where no one is going to say anything," one official said.

Most officials interviewed agreed that the seeding had accomplished one of its main objectives — muddying roads and flooding lines of communication. But there were also many military and Government officials who expressed doubt that the project had caused any dramatic results.

The sources, without providing details, also said that a method had been developed for treating clouds with a chemical that eventually produced an acidic rainfall capable of fouling the operation of North Vietnamese radar equipment used for directing surface-to-air missiles.

In addition to hampering SAM missiles and delaying North Vietnamese infiltration, the rainmaking program had the following purposes:

• Providing rain and cloud cover for infiltration of South Vietnamese commando and intelligence teams into North Vietnam.

• Serving as a "spoiler" for North Vietnamese attacks and raids in South Vietnam.

• Altering or tailoring the rain patterns over North Vietnam and Laos to aid United States bombing missions.

• Diverting North Vietnamese men and material from military operations to keep muddled roads and other lines of communication in operation.

Keyed To Monsoon

The cloud-seeding operations

two main monsoon seasons that affect Laos and Vietnam. "It was just trying to add on to something that you already got," one officer said.

Military sources said that one main goal was to increase the duration of the southwest monsoon, which spawns high-rising cumulus clouds — those most susceptible to cloud seeding — over the panhandle areas of Laos and North Vietnam from May to early October. The longer rainy season thus would give the Air Force more opportunity to trigger rainstorms.

"We were trying to arrange the weather pattern to suit our convenience," said one former Government official who had detailed knowledge of the operation.

According to interviews, the Central Intelligence Agency initiated the use of cloud-seeding over Hue, in the northern part of South Vietnam. "We first used that stuff in about August of 1963," one former C.I.A. agent said, "when the Diem regime was having all that trouble with the Buddhists."

"They would just stand around during demonstrations when the police threw tear gas at them, but we noticed that when the rains came they wouldn't stay on," the former agent said.

"The agency got an Air America Beechcraft and had it rigged up with silver iodide," he said. "There was another demonstration and we seeded the area. It rained."

A similar cloud-seeding was carried out by C.I.A. aircraft in Saigon at least once during the summer of 1964, the former agent said.

Expanded to Trail

The Intelligence Agency expanded its cloud-seeding activities to the Ho Chi Minh supply trail in Laos sometime in the middle nineteen-sixties, a number of Government sources said. By 1967, the Air Force had become involved although, as one former Government official said, "the agency was calling all the shots."

"I always assumed the agency had a mandate from the White House to do it," he added.

A number of former CIA, and high-ranking Johnson Administration officials depicted the operations along the trail as experimental.

The state of the art had not yet advanced to the point where it was possible to predict the results of a seeding operation with any degree of confidence, one Government official said. "We used to go out flying around and looking for a certain cloud formation," the official said. "And we made a lot of mistakes. Once we dumped

seven inches of rain in two hours on one of our Special Forces camps."

Despite the professed skepticism on the part of some members of the Johnson Administration, military men apparently took the weather modification program much more seriously.

According to a document contained in the Pentagon papers, the Defense Department's secret history of the war, weather modification was one of seven basic options for stepping up the war that were presented on request by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the White House in late February, 1967.

The document described the weather program over Laos — officially known as Operation Pop-Eye — as an attempt "to reduce trafficability along infiltration routes."

Authorization Needed

It said that Presidential authorization was "required to implement operational phase of weather modification process previously successfully tested and evaluated in same area." The brief summary concluded by stating that "risk of compromise is minimal."

A similar option was cited in another 1967 working document published in the Pentagon papers. Neither attracted any immediate public attention.

The Laos cloud-seeding operations did provoke, however, a lengthy and bitter, albeit secret, dispute inside the Johnson Administration in 1967. A team of State Department attorneys and officials protested that the use of cloud-seeding was a dangerous precedent for the United States.

"I felt that the military and agency hadn't analyzed it to determine if it was in our interest," one official who was involved in the dispute said. He also was concerned over the right secrecy of the project, he said, "although it might have been all right to keep it secret if you did it once and didn't want the precedent to become known."

The general feeling was summarized by one former State Department official who said he was concerned that the rainmaking "might violate what we considered the general rule of the thumb for an illegal weapon of war—something that would cause unusual suffering or disproportionate damage." There also was concern, he

added, because of the unknown ecological risks.

A Nixon Administration official said that he believed the first use of weather modification over North Vietnam took place in late 1968 or early 1969.

ability of antiaircraft missiles to hit American jets in the panhandle region near the Laotian border.

Over the next two years, this official added, "it seemed to get more important—the reports were coming more frequently."

It could not be learned how many specific missions were carried out in any year.

One well-informed source said that Navy scientists were responsible for developing a new kind of chemical agent effective in the warm stratus clouds that often shielded many key antiaircraft sites in northern parts of North Vietnam.

The chemical, he said, "produced a rain that had an acidic quality to it and it would foul up mechanical equipment—like radars, trucks and tanks."

"This wasn't originally in our planning," the official added, "it was a refinement."

Apparently, many Air Force cloud-seeding missions were conducted over North Vietnam and Laos simply to confuse or "attenuate"—a word used by many military men—the radar equipment that controls antiaircraft missiles. The planes used for such operations, C-130's, must fly at relatively slow speeds and at altitudes no greater than 22,000 feet to disperse the rainmaking chemicals effectively.

A number of officials confirmed that cloud seeding had been widely used in South Vietnam, particularly in the north along the Laos border. "We tried to use it in connection with air and ground operations," a military officer explained.

One Government official explained more explicitly that "if you were expecting a raid from their side, you would try to control the weather to make it more difficult." This official estimated that more than half of the actual cloud-seeding operations in 1969 and 1970 took place in South Vietnam.

Much of the basic research was provided by Navy scientists, and the seeding operations were flown by the Air Weather Service of the Air Force.

By 1967, or possibly earlier, the Air Force flights were originating from a special operations group at Udorn air base in Thailand. No more than four C-130's, and usually only two, were assigned in the highly restricted section of the base. Each plane was capable of carrying out more than one mission on one flight.

One former high-ranking official said in an interview that by the end of 1971 the program, which had been given at least three different code names since the middle nineteen-sixties, was under the direct control of the White House.

many usually well-informed members of the Nixon Administration had been kept in the dark.

In the last year, there have been repeated inquiries and publicly posed questions by members of Congress about the weather modification programs in Southeast Asia, but no accurate information has been provided to them by the Department of Defense.

"This kind of thing was a bomb, and Henry restricted information about it to those who had to know," said one well-placed Government official, referring to Henry A. Kissinger, the President's adviser on national security.

Nonetheless, the official said, "I understood it to be a spoiling action—that this was descriptive of what was going on north of the DMZ with the roads and the SAM sites."

Another source said that most of the weather modification activities eventually were conducted with the aid and support of the South Vietnamese. "I think we were trying to teach the South Vietnamese how to fly the cloud-seeding missions," the source said.

It was impossible to learn where the staffing and research for the secret weather operation were carried out. Sources at the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories at Hanscomb Field in Bedford, Mass., and at the Air Weather Service headquarters, while acknowledging that they had heard of the secret operation, said they had no information about its research center.

One Government source did say that a group was "now evaluating the program to see how much additional rain was caused." He would not elaborate.

Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2009/10/29 : CIA-RDP75B00380R000100030112-8



Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2009/10/29 : CIA-RDP75B00380R000100030112-8

NEW YORK TIMES

DATE

13-97472

PAGE

ed

Pentagon:

Weather As a Weapon Of War

WASHINGTON—Dr. Gordon J. F. MacDonald, a prominent geophysicist who had just completed a tour as vice president of the Defense Department's Institute of Defense Analysis, published in 1968 a little-noted but chilling study on the military potential of meteorological warfare. He listed a number of options available to those who would choose to tamper with nature. Among them:

- Altering the world's temperature by rocketing materials into the earth's upper atmosphere to either absorb light (thereby cooling the surface below) or absorb outgoing heat (thereby heating the surface below). This technique could be targeted at a specific area.

- Triggering tidal waves by setting off a series of underground explosions along the edge of the Continental Shelf, or by producing a natural earthquake. A guided tidal wave could be achieved by correctly shaping the energy-release sources.

- Changing the physical makeup of the atmosphere by creating, with a rocket or similar weapon, a "hole" in the important ozone layer between 10 and 30 miles up that is responsible for absorbing much of the ultra-violet light cast from the sun. Without the protective layer of ozone, a molecular form of oxygen, the radiation would be fatal to all human, plant and animal life that could not take shelter in the affected area below.

Dr. MacDonald (who is now a member of the White House Council on Environmental Quality) made it clear that his essay was based only on speculation. Last week, however, it became known that at least part of his macabre weather arsenal had been secretly in use by the United States since the 1960's.

Air Force planes, supported by the Central Intelligence Agency, have been

waging a systematic war of rain on the infiltration trails of Laos, Cambodia, North Vietnam and South Vietnam. The intent: suppress enemy anti-missile fire, provide cover for South Vietnamese commando teams penetrating the North and hinder the movement of men and matériel from North Vietnam into the South.

The first experimental rain-making mission was flown by the C.I.A. in South Vietnam in 1963, but it was not until 1965 that a group of Air Force scientists officially was ordered to start thinking of ways to turn nature into a military tool.

"We all sat down in a big brainstorming session," said one of the scientists who participated at the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories at Hanscomb Field near Bedford, Mass. "The idea was to increase the rain and reduce the trafficability in all of Southeast Asia."

Within a year, the Air Force and C.I.A. began a highly secret rain-making project over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos, known as "Operation Pop-Eye." There were heated protests from the State Department, and eventually a directive from the Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara ordering a halt to the project. Instead, well-qualified sources said last week, "it went underground—into the dark."

From 1969 through at least early this year, weather warfare was a covert operation being directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff with White House acquiescence.

The fact that the program existed at all came to light only last week in The New York Times. But, despite an extensive investigation, it could not be learned how successful the program had been, how many missions were conducted or whether it was still being used in connection with the heavy bombing of North Vietnam that followed the enemy offensive last April.

Making rain has long been technically feasible. Scientists have learned that rain fall can be increased by as much as 40 per cent after seeding clouds by aircraft with silver-iodide particles. Other chemicals, including dry ice, also have been used with success, both in the United States and in Southeast Asia.

Military and Government specialists acknowledge that there is little precise scientific knowledge of the short-range impact of cloud seeding and practically none of the long-range ecological effect of changing the amount of natural rainfall. Some scientists have

published data suggesting that weather modification, in combination with other ecological stresses such as air pollution and pesticides, may have a synergistic effect—that is, result in collective changes far greater than either abuse would have caused by itself.

In Indochina, where heavy bombing already has robbed much of the landscape of its natural water-holding capability by destroying foliage and trees, artificially induced rains may result in far greater flooding than expected, along with heavier soil erosion.

Technically, there are no interna-

tional agreements outlawing such warfare. But Government officials made clear last week that the weather-making activity of the Air Force was shielded from public view because of White House sensitivity to what could be regarded as the impropriety of the action. The issue, one well-informed official said, was one in which Henry A. Kissinger, the President's national security adviser, took a personal hand. "This kind of thing was a bomb," the official said, "and Henry restricted information about it to those who had to know."

—SEYMOUR M. HERSH